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TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

Utah Coal Regulatory Program

July 2, 2012

TO: Internal File

THRU: April Abate, Lead *Abate 8/2/2012*

FROM: Joe Helfrich, Biology *JH*

RE: Phase II Bond Release, Plateau Mining Corporation, Willow Creek Mine, C/007/0038, Task ID #4094

SUMMARY:

On May 4, 2012 the Division received an application from PMC for phase II bond release of the remaining 95.4 acres and phase 1 and II bond release for the loadout, (1.17 acres), within the disturbed area boundary at the Willow Creek mine. On June 18th representatives from the Division, BLM and Dennis Ware toured the reclaimed areas that comprise the 95.4 acre parcel. These areas included Crandall Canyon, Gravel Canyon, Prep Plant, Loadout and Refuse Pile and the Conveyor Corridor. This memo will include a review of the application as it relates to the post mining land use and phase II bond release sections of the regulations.

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TECHNICAL ANALYSIS:

RECLAMATION PLAN

POSTMINING LAND USES

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR Sec. 784.15, 784.200, 785.16, 817.133; R645-301-412, -301-413, -301-414, -302-270, -302-271, -302-272, -302-273, -302-274, -302-275.

Analysis:

The postmining land use for the areas included in the phase II bond release application is wildlife and grazing.

Findings:

The information in the application is adequate to meet the requirements of this section of the regulations.

REVEGETATION

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR Sec. 785.18, 817.111, 817.113, 817.114, 817.116; R645-301-244, -301-353, -301-354, -301-355, -301-356, -302-280, -302-281, -302-282, -302-283, -302-284.

Analysis:

A four year comprehensive vegetative survey was completed in 2008 in preparation for phase II bond release, (Attachment 1). Table 1 of the attachment illustrates a summary of the vegetation sample areas, protocols, methods and sample sizes for the reclaimed, reference and riparian bottomlands areas. Depending on the reclaimed area and the protocol employed to determine revegetation success standards, (Baseline or Reference Area Methods), the following parameters were compared: total living cover, woody species density and annual biomass productivity. The results of the data collected indicated that in all cases the reclaimed areas either met or exceeded those of the success standards. The site visit also verified the presence of the majority of species listed in the seed mix for reclamation.

Findings:

The information in the application is adequate to meet the requirements of this section of the regulations.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The phase II bond release application is recommended for approval.

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